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A GLANCE AT LATIN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

1916

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A GLANCE AT LATIN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION¹ ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴

The civilization of peoples cannot always be gauged by set standards. There are varying factors to be taken into consideration and discrepancies to be accounted for in measuring the degree of cultural and industrial progress of a nation. Conditions growing out of racial characteristics, historical necessities, geographical position, custom and habit, on the one hand, and on the other the basic principles upon which different societies have been built, must not be lost sight of in dealing with, or rather, in endeavoring to understand the factors that have led to the progress of a given nation, or aggregate of nations of the same or similar origin.

Latin American civilization from an Anglo Saxon point of view may be found wanting in many respects, but the life and happiness of nations, the ideals and hopes of their peoples, their legislation and institutions, are not to be found ready made, but have to be worked out to meet peculiar wants, and in accordance with the racial, mental, moral and material resources and necessities of each.

We must deal with Latin America as a whole if we wish to cast a rapid glance at its civilization. Some of the twenty free and independent states which in their aggregate make up Latin America have developed more than others, and a few marvelously so, but whether north or south of the Panama Canal, east or west, on the Atlantic or the Pacific, on the Caribbean or the Gulf of Mexico, the countries of Latin America sprang from the same race—the brave, hardy, adventurous, romantic and warlike Spanish and Portuguese conquerors, who fought their way through unknown territories, whether in quest of “El Dorado” or in warfare against whole nations of Indians, as in the case of Mexico and Peru, where the native Indians had a marvelous civilization of their own.

On the other hand, the men who founded these United States, the Pilgrims who first set foot on this new land of promise, and those who followed in the wake of the first settlers, came to this country already prepared, through years of training, to govern themselves. They came to the friendly shores of the New World in quest of freedom. They wanted a home in a new land not yet contaminated with the spirit of the Old World. They brought with them their creed, their habits of order

¹By Francisco J. Yánes, Asst. Director, and Secretary of the Governing Board, of the Pan American Union. Reprinted from *The Journal of Race Development*, Vol. 4, No. 4, April, 1914.

and discipline, their love of freedom, their respect for the established principles of law. Hence from its inception Anglo American civilization was built upon solid ground. Its subsequent development—the marvel of the last half of the nineteenth and this our twentieth century—is due to the solidity of their institutions, their steadfastness of purpose, their practical sense of life, and a territorial expanse where all the soils, all the wealth, all the climatic conditions of the cold, the temperate and the tropical zone can be found.

The discussion of Latin American civilization is of vast importance, since it deals with the history and development of twenty republics lying beyond the Mexican border, and covering an aggregate area of about 9,000,000 square miles, with a total population of over 70,000,000, of which 48,000,000 speak the Spanish language, 20,000,000 Portuguese in Brazil, and 2,000,000 French in Haiti. This general division brings us at once to deal, under the same classification, with peoples and civilization springing from different sources—Spanish, Portuguese and French. Even among the Spanish-speaking countries there are conditions, depending on the province of origin of the first Spanish colonizers and settlers, who came mainly from Biscay, Andalusia, Castile, Aragon, and Extremadura, which further tend to establish other slight differences, just as the various states of this country show differences due to the sources of their population.

For our purpose, a general survey of the twenty countries called Latin America is not amiss. Geographically, Latin America begins beyond the Rio Grande, with Mexico, at the southern boundary of which extends what is called Central America, consisting of Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, the historic five Central American states; Panama, the gateway to the Pacific on the west and to the Caribbean and the Atlantic on the east; South America proper, embracing Venezuela on the Caribbean, Colombia on that sea and partly on the Pacific; Ecuador, Peru and Chile, bordering on the Pacific; Bolivia and Paraguay, inland states in the heart of South America; Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil on the Atlantic; and, lastly, Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, islands in the Caribbean Sea. So we see that Latin American extends from the north temperate zone to Cape Horn, near the Antarctic Ocean, which means that all climatic conditions are found in that enormous area over which the pole star, the Southern Cross, and the constellations brightening the South Pole keep nightly watch, from the cool regions of northern Mexico to the tropical heat of the torrid zone and again to the cold lands of Patagonia. This is indeed a world of wealth where all the products of the entire globe can be successfully cultivated, where all races of mankind can live

and thrive, because the Mexican and Central American cordilleras, and further south the mighty Andean range, offer an unbroken chain of lofty peaks, wide valleys, and extensive tablelands, affording all climates and zones, all kinds of soils and minerals, the only limitations to the development of these lands being human endurance. The water supply is plentiful in most parts of Mexico and the Central American republics, and there is nothing in the world which can be compared to the hydrographic areas of northern and central South America, consisting of the Orinoco basin with its 400 affluents, offering a total navigable length of about 4000 miles; the mighty Amazon having three times the volume of the Mississippi and navigable for over 2000 miles, and the network of great rivers emptying into it; the Paraná and the River Plata, with twice the volume of the Mississippi, and a thousand other streams too numerous to mention in detail, but which can be found on any fairly good map, showing a feasible water route from the mouth of the Orinoco in Venezuela to the Amazon and the very heart of South America, and thence to the Paraná and finally to the River Plata.

We all know how Columbus discovered this New World which today bears the name of America (although the application of that name is quite restricted in this country to the United States)—we have all heard of the hardships Columbus and his followers had to endure, their sufferings, their hopes, and their faith in some supernatural fate, a trait begotten by the influence of Moorish ancestors in Spain through the mingling of both races during the occupation wars which lasted over eight centuries. The discovery of America has a tinge of romance, such as inspires the soul of the adventurer and the buccaneer. It was a romance that began at the Rábida, grew in the presence and with the help of good Queen Isabella, developed into a mad desire for adventure at Palos, and ended with the planting of the Spanish standard on the shores of Guanahani, now called Watling's Island. From here Columbus went to what is today called Cuba, thence to Hispaniola—now divided into Haiti and the Dominican Republic, where his remains now rest in the Cathedral at Santo Domingo—and in this latter island founded the first white settlement in the New World. We cannot follow Columbus' voyages or his adventures step by step, but we must feel that the discovery of America is an epic poem worthy of the mettle of the great discoverer and his men.

And so the civilization of what is called Latin America began with the first Spanish settlement, the first Indian blood shed by the greed of the white conqueror, and the first attempt to Christianize the inhabitants of the new-found land. The inevitable features of conquest—war, treachery, destruction, fire, sword, deeds of valor but little known, and

endurance almost superhuman—marked along the trail of the discoverers the birth and first steps of the New World. And in the midst of this turmoil, bravely battling against unknown odds, the Spanish missionary fathers worked unceasingly, founding hamlets and towns, thus planting in the wilderness the seeds of many a large city today, building their temples of worship, going from place to place struggling with disease and hunger, teaching the Indians the Spanish language and with it their religious faith, and laying the foundation of what is known today as Latin America.

The second stage of Latin American civilization began when the crown of Spain finally took an active interest in its new possessions and men of a better class than the soldiery which landed with the discoverers and conquerors began to come to the New World, bringing their wives and daughters, and surrounding themselves with whatever comforts could be had in their new home. They were in many cases scions of noble families, who came either as viceroys, governors, or in some other administrative capacity, or as “oidores,” judges and men of letters in general. There also came learned monks, and among these, philosophers, poets, musicians, painters, etc. Hence some of the oldest descriptions and chronicles of Latin America are in verse or in choice prose, either in Spanish or in Latin, and we find in some of the oldest cities in Spanish America wonderful examples of wood carving, either in churches or in old houses, beautiful specimens of the gold and silversmiths’ art in ware of the precious metals, some fine paintings, and unexcelled samples of the art of illuminating books, particularly missals.

The scholars, either members of the religious orders or laymen, began to gather books imported from Europe, and so our libraries were started, mainly in the convents. With this feature of civilization the necessity of educating the children of the Spaniards and the Indians became more pressing, and private schools and seminaries were established, as a first step to the foundation of universities. I think it is due to the Spaniards to state right here that both in Mexico and in Peru schools were founded for the education of the Indians, to teach them not only reading and writing, but the manual arts as well.

We Latin Americans record with natural pride the fact that the first university founded in the New World was that of Santo Tomás de Aquino at Santo Domingo, in 1538. This University is no longer in existence, but we still have that of San Marcos at Lima, Peru, founded in 1551; the University of Mexico, established in 1553 and refounded in 1910; the University of Cordoba, in Argentina, dating from 1613; that of Sucre in Bolivia, founded in 1623, or thirteen years before Harvard, which dates from 1636, and that of Cuzco, in Peru, established in 1692,

or eight years earlier than Yale, which was founded in 1701. The University of Caracas, in Venezuela, dates from 1721, and that of Habana, Cuba, from 1728, the other universities founded before the nineteenth century being that of Santiago, Chile, in 1743, and the University of Quito, Ecuador, in 1787.

The great agent of civilization and progress, the printing press, has been known in Latin America since 1536, when the first printing outfit was introduced into Mexico and the first book printed in the New World, a plea of Father Las Casas for a better life. Cartagena, Colombia, is said to have been the second city of America to have a printing press, in 1560 or 1562, but Peru seems to hold the record for the first book printed in South America, about 1584, and La Paz, Bolivia, had a printing establishment about 1610. There were also a press and other printing paraphernalia at the Jesuit missions of Paraguay about the first decade of the seventeenth century. The first work in Bogota was printed about 1739; Ecuador printed its first book in 1760, and Venezuela in 1764, while the earliest production of the Chilean press bears the date of 1776; and there was a printing outfit in Cordoba, Argentina, in 1767. With the foundation of universities and schools and more frequent communication with Spain and other European countries of Latin origin, and the printing of books and newspapers in the New World, the desire for learning was developed and a new field was opened to intellectual culture.

Dissatisfaction of the colonies with the exactions and abuses of the viceroys, captains-general and other officials representing the crown of Spain, jealousies between the creoles, or children of Spanish parents born in America, and the "peninsulars," or native Spaniards, commercial preference and social distinctions, and other petty annoyances born of the arrogance of the Spaniards, on the one hand, and the proud nature of the creoles on the other, were the smouldering embers that, fanned by the success of the American Revolution and the storm of the French Revolution, set on fire the Spanish colonies at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The majority of the Spanish American countries attained their independence between 1804 and 1825, and their struggles for freedom, while encouraged by the example of the United States, were inspired in French ideals. The heroes of the bloody but romantic French Revolution, their fiery speeches and undaunted bravery, their proclamation of the republic and the rights of man; the echoes of the Boston Tea Party, the exploits of the spirit of '76, the commanding and serene figure of Washington, the birth of the American Constitution, the utterances of the grave thinkers and inspired orators of the revolutionary period—all these dazzling examples of patriotism appealed to the Spanish American colonists, and

one by one the colonies began their fight for independence. The executions and ignominy heaped upon the first patriots who forfeited their lives for the cause of independence, instead of discouraging the leaders, made them more aggressive, and they resolved to gain the day at all hazards.

We come now to the most brilliant pages of the history of Latin America, and upon these pages are written the names of Miranda of Venezuela, the precursor of South American independence; Bolivar, who has been called the Washington of South America, a brilliant soldier and born leader, the liberator and father of Venezuela, his native country, and of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia; Sucre, also a Venezuelan, more like Washington than Bolivar, the very soul of honor, a gallant knight and an accomplished diplomat; San Martin, the brave and heroic liberator of the southern half of South America; Artigas, a man of sterling qualities; O'Higgins, the great Chilean hero; Tiradentes, the forerunner of Brazilian independence; Morelos and Hidalgo in Mexico, both Catholic priests, and both martyrs to the cause of independence; and hundreds of others from each country whose names would be meaningless except to those well acquainted with the history of South America.

But, once free from colonial bondage, the new republics, whose political constitutions in the main are based on that of the United States, had to deal with fresh problems arising from changed conditions. The new political entities commenced their independent life heavily handicapped, on the one hand by their economic condition after a period of protracted wars, and on the other hand by a scarcity of population, and—though paradoxical, nevertheless true—the fertility of the soil and extremely favorable climatic conditions. The unbounded productiveness of Latin America, coupled with the modest wants of the masses, has been the main cause of the slow development of most of these countries as manufacturing centers, their chief means of support being agricultural and allied industries, and mining. The evolution out of all this chaos has been more rapid in some countries than in others, due to special conditions, among which the principal ones are in general terms geographic and topographic position, and predominance of the white man.

The leading classes, owners of black slaves and landlords to the Indian tenantry, lived for the most part in relative ease after the war of independence. Those who did not seek in the army a field for their activities or inclinations, devoted themselves to intellectual and scientific pursuits, either in civil life or in the service of the church. Some went abroad, to France or Spain preferably, to acquire a general education or to perfect that received at home and to see the world, on their return bringing new ideas which were eventually adopted and more or less

modified as necessity demanded. With the progress of the nineteenth century Latin America also advanced.

Intellectually, the Latin Americans are anything but the inferiors of the Anglo Americans. The literature of Latin America is as rich and valuable as that of any country, yet it is hardly known—not to say entirely unknown—in the United States except by a handful of men who have devoted their time to the study of the Spanish language. It is only now, during the last few years, that a desire to know Spanish has made itself felt in the United States, and it is astonishing to note the number of persons now able to read and understand the language. On the other hand, the study of modern languages is compulsory in all of the universities and colleges of Latin America, and absolutely necessary to obtain certain academic degrees. French was for a long time the language chosen by the majority of the students, hence the influence of French literature and French thought in Latin America. German was taken up by many, more as a commercial tongue than otherwise, but even so, German literature, particularly the works of Goethe, Schiller and Heine, and most of the writers of today, are well known in Latin America. English was preferred by others, rather as an accomplishment than as a language of immediate practical use, until now it has taken, in many cases, the place of German. These two languages have followed the trend of trade, but English is becoming more useful every day in view of the increased relations of Latin America with the United States, in all spheres of human activity.

The problem of education has always commanded the earnest attention of all the Latin American governments, to the extent of having made primary education, in most of these countries, not only free but compulsory. So far as higher education is concerned—that is, all grades above primary—there are institutions, either public or private, or both, for secondary and superior education, normal schools, schools of mines, agricultural and manual training, technological institutes, colleges, universities, conservatories of music, academies of painting and sculpture, national or public libraries, museums, etc.—in short, all kinds of institutions devoted to the moral and intellectual uplift of the people.

In all the Latin American countries there is a system of scholarships which serves as a practical means of promoting interest in education. This system provides for supporting abroad for a certain length of time such of the students and graduates as have won honors, who are sent to Europe and in some cases to the United States, to perfect their education and bring home new methods and the latest and most approved systems. We frequently hear at the Pan American Union of Latin Americans who have come to the United States or are coming here to

take a post-graduate course in some science or profession, and others who are in this country studying and investigating school methods and appliances. At present there are over 1350 such students in the United States.

I think this is the proper occasion to urge upon American scholars and professors the necessity of encouraging the preparation in the English language of popular monographs for school use, written by responsible and unprejudiced men, on the history and geography of the Latin American countries. So far as I know, there is not a single well-known schoolbook in English giving in a concise, impartial manner the history of any one of the countries of Latin America. The history of the United States, on the other hand, is studied in Latin American colleges and universities along with the modern history of France and England, Spain, Italy and Germany. Another point that deserves passing mention is the scarcity of good American books in Latin America, in the Spanish language, due to their enormous cost. France, Italy, Germany, and Spain especially, publish in Spanish hundreds of useful books on history, science, geography, literature, etc., at prices so low that no one can give excessive cost as an excuse for not having what is termed in Spanish "an economical library," that is, small volumes of several pages, well edited, bound in paper, which are worth from 20 cents up to 50 or 75 cents. An American work cannot be obtained at such prices. I can remember in my childhood days having learned to read from a series of books, edited in Spanish by a New York publishing firm, called "*Libros de Lectura de Mandeville*" (Mandeville's Readers). The school geography was also edited in Spanish by the same publishing house, if I am not mistaken, and was called "*Primer Libro de Geografia de Smith*" (Smith's (Asa) *First book of Geography*). If the sale of American printed books fails of success in Latin America, it is due mainly to the almost prohibitive prices.

With better means of communication and a desire to expand their trade with Latin America, United States merchants and travelers are visiting intelligently the Latin American countries, and men of science and learning have, during the last few years, turned their eyes toward that continent, bringing to light the wonders of past ages buried by the sands of Time, and doing justice to a civilization until then little known, and only by a few. No better proof of the fact that Latin American civilization is worthy of note could be had than the desire to exchange professors and students between certain universities of the United States and those of the leading South American countries.

Latin Americans have done much towards the progress of the world both intellectually and materially. Civilization may be divided into

two great branches from which others spring: development of the intellectual forces of mankind, and development of the material resources for the benefit of all. Under the first head—as I have endeavored to show in the brief review of Latin American history just made—we have educational institutions to train and perfect the mind, which have existed in Latin America for centuries, and the result of this training has been great jurists, historians, orators, physicians, painters, sculptors, poets, musicians, playwrights, and others too numerous to mention, as we are dealing with twenty countries, but whose works might fill a good-sized library. We have painters and sculptors of renown, whose works have been admired, rewarded and commended in the leading art centers of the world, and in all the countries there are art schools from which the students go preferably to Italy or France, most frequently pensioned by the government, to perfect themselves and do honor to their motherland. We have musicians wedded to their art and a credit to the country and themselves; and composers, singers and players educated in our own conservatories or schools. We have theatres and opera houses not surpassed by any others in America or Europe, and the governments of many, if not all of the Latin American countries, contribute to the musical education of the people by subsidizing opera troupes every season or so, paying heavy sums to obtain the best singers. Many a celebrity who has come to New York has commenced his career in Latin America.

There is another phase of Latin American civilization showing in an unquestionable manner a natural tendency towards the establishment of higher ideals—those ideals that are today being proclaimed by men of good will of all nations. I refer to arbitration, the recourse to which is the highest form of culture among peoples. Arbitration is not new with us. It is one of the basic principles of the foundation of our social structure, since it rests on the civil law of Rome, which provides for arbitration as one of the ordinary and usual means of settling differences between man and man. The principle of arbitration was first proclaimed on our continent by General Bolivar, the Liberator of South America—as far-sighted and keen a statesman as he was a military genius. Bolivar was the originator of the idea of holding the first Congress of Nations of America in Panama in 1826, for the purpose, among others, of adopting arbitration as a principle of American—that is to say, Pan American—policy.

In recent years we have had recourse to arbitration and direct negotiations partaking often of the nature of arbitration, more frequently than in all the rest of the world. Our Latin American wars have been civil wars for a political principle, and these mainly in countries where the

military element predominates. We have never engaged in wars of conquest. In our international difficulties, arbitration has always been the keynote of our negotiations. It is a remarkable fact that in the history of our Latin American republics, since they became independent from the mother country over one hundred years ago, we have had among ourselves only two wars which, if international in a sense, could be classed as national, since they were fought among members of our own family of republics. But these wars were not fought for territorial expansion nor in the spirit of conquest, although territory may have been gained as an indemnity. I refer to the Paraguayan war against Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, and the war of Chile and Bolivia against Peru. On the other hand, who, looking at the map of Europe today, would recognize it as the same Europe of half a century ago? With one or two exceptions—the Iberian and the Scandinavian peninsulas and the British Isles—there is not a single country that has not been remade at the cost of numberless lives and enormous bloodshed.

All our boundary disputes—and they have been many—have been or are being settled by arbitration. Now, could any better proof be offered of the advancement of peoples who, while springing directly from a race of warriors, do not fear to work towards the ends of peace?

Another proof of this spirit of progress is the maintenance in the city of Washington, by all the countries of our American hemisphere, of a unique organization called the Pan American Union, the living embodiment of the idea which created the International Union of American Republics as a result of the first Pan American Conference held in Washington over twenty years ago at the invitation of that great American statesman, James G. Blaine. The Pan American Union represents the spirit of progress, the desire for a better understanding, the necessity for stronger ties of friendship, felt among the republics of the three Americas, by making them known to one another, by bringing to the attention of the American people the opportunities offered by the Latin American countries, their civilization, their onward march towards prosperity, united in a single purpose of material and moral advancement.

There is another aspect of Latin American civilization which deserves more than passing attention. It is their political life as members of the Pan American fraternity of independent nations. Their first step towards higher ideals was their declaration of independence and their assuming the duties and exercising the rights of sovereign states. The transition from colonial dependencies to self-governing nations was fraught with difficulties unknown to the citizens of the original thirteen states of the North American Union, resulting from different conditions, due in the main to the spirit that inspired their complete emancipation.

The original thirteen states separated from England principally for practical reasons, while the Spanish American countries had to contend with an economic as well as a political problem.

After a period of evolution—or, if you prefer it, revolutions—during which the several antagonistic interests were undergoing a process of amalgamation, or better still, clarification, there now exists, in the majority of Latin American countries, stable governments whose sole aim is to maintain above reproach the moral as well as the economic credit of their respective nations, so as to attract foreign capital and energy, which will stimulate the development of home industries, and insure peace, prosperity and happiness to its citizens. Some Latin American countries have been less fortunate, but every disturbance, every civil strife, has been a misdirected effort towards the attainment of a goal dreamed of by all and by all desired. Public education, foreign commerce, improved means of communication, greater development of the natural wealth of those countries are factors which have contributed and are constantly contributing to the establishment of a peaceful era which will eventually become normal and stable.

As to the material phase of Latin American civilization, all I have to say is that communication with the other countries of the world is represented by over fifty steamship lines plying between European ports and those of Latin America, and about twenty-five lines running from the United States to the Atlantic, Caribbean and west coast ports of Latin America. The combined railway mileage from Mexico down to Chile and Argentina, including the island countries of Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, is estimated at 65,330 miles, Argentina leading with over 20,300 miles; next comes Mexico with over 16,000 miles; Brazil follows with about 14,000 miles; Chile, over 5,000; Cuba, nearly 2,200, and the other republics in lesser proportion. There is not one single country, however, that is not included in this total mileage. It may seem strange that in an area of about 9,000,000 square miles there should be only 65,000 miles of railway, but if you stop a moment to consider the enormous barrier extending along the west coast of South America, formed by the mighty range of mountains which is but a continuation through Mexico, Central, and western South America of the Rocky Mountains, and the scarcity of population which creates demands and makes traffic profitable, you will understand why the railways of Latin America have not advanced faster. But even under these circumstances, not a day passes but some work is done towards the extension of that railway mileage.

Another phase of civilization and progress is the foreign commerce of a country. Latin America in this respect has a good record, and the figures representing its foreign trade in 1912 are, in round numbers, as

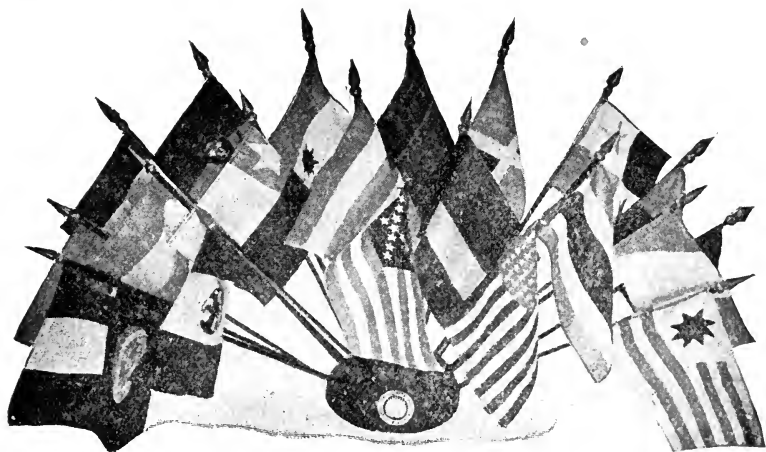
follows: total Latin American commerce, \$2,811,000,000, the exports being represented by \$1,571,000,000 and the imports by \$1,240,000,000. The total trade with the United States amounted to about \$825,832,000, of which \$519,025,000 was exports, and \$306,807,000 imports. The progress made by Latin America in its commercial relations with the world at large and the United States, especially, shows that there is a great consumption of all such articles as are considered necessary to civilization. Latin America is not a manufacturing continent; it mainly produces for export agricultural products such as sugar, coffee, rubber, tobacco, cacao or cocoa, cotton, etc., hides and other raw materials, mining products such as silver, gold, tin, copper, iron, bismuth, saltpeter, etc., and a few gems. Its main imports are machinery of all kinds, hardware, cotton and other fabrics, foodstuffs, carriages and automobiles, railway material, electrical appliances, and other similar products of industry necessary to the cultivation of the land, the improvement of roads and cities, and the comfort of the inhabitants. There is not a city of any importance in Latin America where either artificial illuminating gas or electric light is unknown. Telegraph and telephone wires stretch all over Latin America, uniting cities and towns, over the wilds and across the mountains, bridging powerful rivers, connecting neighboring countries and linking our shores with the rest of the civilized world. Not an event of any importance takes place in Europe, Asia, or Africa, or the United States which the submarine cable does not bring to the Latin American press, to be made public either in the form of bulletins or in "extras," according to the importance of the event, while nearly every Latin American country has its wireless telegraph system. Electric cars are fast replacing the older and slower methods of transportation within the cities and extending their usefulness to carrying passengers to suburban villas, small towns or country places of amusement, and Buenos Aires, the largest Latin American capital, has a subway in operation.

In conclusion, I may say that a charge frequently made against us Latin Americans, and in a sense true, is that we are a race of dreamers. Perhaps it is so. We inherited from our forefathers the love of the beautiful and the grand; the facility for expression and the vivid imagination of our race; from them we inherited the sonorous, majestic Spanish, the flexible, musical Portuguese, and the French, language of art, and a responsive chord to all that thrills, be it color, harmony, or mental imagery; we inherited their varying moods, their noble traits and their shortcomings, both of which we have preserved, and in certain cases improved, under the influence of our environment, our majestic mountains, our primeval forests, the ever blooming tropical flowers, the birds of sweetest wild songs and wonderful plumage; under magnificent

skies and the inspiration taken from other poets and writers, be they foreign or native, who have gone through life like the minstrels of old with a song on their lips and an unsatisfied yearning in their hearts.

Much more might be said to show the constant endeavor of Latin America to cooperate with its best efforts to the civilization of the world. It has contributed readily according to its Latin standards, and from the day of its independence and the establishment of republican institutions, Latin America has recognized the rights of man, abolished slavery, fostered education, developed its commerce and increased traveling facilities and means of communication with the outer world. It has contributed to the best of its ability to the sum total of human betterment, and the day cannot be far off when full justice will be done to the efforts of the countries south of the United States, where live a people intelligent, progressive, proud of their history and their own efforts, and ready to extend a friendly hand and a sincere welcome to those who are willing to understand them, and aid them on their road to progress.

The interest shown by the leading universities and educational institutions of the United States in fostering better acquaintance with intellectual Latin America, in giving special courses in the history of those nations, in endeavoring to establish with them an exchange of professors and students, deserves the sincere appreciation of every Latin American, and as a Latin American myself, I desire to express here my deep gratitude. To Clark University, in particular, and its executive officers, I wish to extend my most cordial congratulations for the friendly—I may say fraternal—thought of dedicating this conference to the discussion of Latin-American topics. It is indeed a noble thought. I also wish to thank the executive officers of Clark University for their courtesy in allowing me to present before you the views of a Latin American as to what we are and what we have done towards the general progress of the world.



THE PAN AMERICAN UNION is the international organization and office maintained in Washington, D. C., by the twenty-one American republics, as follows: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. It is devoted to the development and advancement of commerce, friendly intercourse, and good understanding among these countries. It is supported by quotas contributed by each country, based upon the population. Its affairs are administered by a Director General and Assistant Director, elected by and responsible to a Governing Board, which is composed of the Secretary of State of the United States and the diplomatic representatives in Washington of the other American governments. These two executive officers are assisted by a staff of international experts, statisticians, commercial specialists, editors, translators, compilers, librarians, clerks and stenographers. The Union publishes a Monthly Bulletin in English, Spanish, Portuguese and French, which is a careful record of Pan American progress. It also publishes numerous special reports and pamphlets on various subjects of practical information. Its library, the Columbus Memorial Library, contains 36,000 volumes, 18,000 photographs, 132,000 index cards, and a large collection of maps. The Union is housed in a beautiful building erected through the munificence of Andrew Carnegie.



